PATENT ABSTRACTS OF JAPAN

(11)Publication number:

2002-168663

(43) Date of publication of application: 14.06.2002

(51)Int.Cl.

GO1F 1/696 3/22 G01F

GO1M

(21)Application number : 2000-370066

(71)Applicant: YAZAKI CORP

NIPPON APPLIED FLOW KK

(22) Date of filing:

05.12.2000

(72)Inventor: YAMASHITA TOMIISA

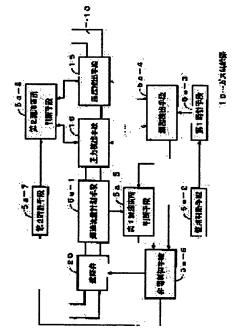
NUKUI KAZUMITSU

(54) FLOW-RATE MEASURING APPARATUS AND LEAKAGE DETECTOR

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide a flow-rate measuring apparatus and a leakage detector, improving leakage detection accuracy, by accurately detecting gas leakages, without begin influence by the temperature of a gas.

SOLUTION: A first counting means 5a-3 starts counting of a first prescribed time, while a usage judging means 5a-2 is being judged 'no'. A leakage detecting means 5a-4 detects the gas leakage, when {gas pressure (hereinafter to be referred to as Pa) detected by the first counting means/gas temperature (hereinafter to be referred to as T1), detected at the counting starting time} ≠{gas pressure (hereinafter to be referred to as P2) detected by the first counting means at count ending



time/gas temperature (hereinafter to be referred to as T2) detected at counting ending time} is satisfied.

LEGAL STATUS

[Date of request for examination]

[Date of sending the examiner's decision of rejection]

[Kind of final disposal of application other than the examiner's decision of rejection or application converted registration]

[Date of final disposal for application]

[Patent number]

[Date of registration]

[Number of appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of requesting appeal against examiner's decision of rejection]

[Date of extinction of right]

* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] In the flow rate metering device equipped with a passage flow rate measurement means to measure the passage flow rate of the gas which is formed all over a gas supply way and supplied to a combustor through said gas supply way A use decision means to judge whether said combustor is using said gas, A temperature detection means to detect the gas temperature in said gas supply way, and a pressure detection means to detect the gas pressure in said gas supply way, said use decision means starts the time check of the 1st predetermined time during decision with no -- with a means the 1st **** said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which ** (ed) with said gas temperature said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of termination -- said time check -- the flow rate metering device characterized by having a leakage detection means to detect gas leakage when the value which was detected at the time of termination, and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is not equal. [Claim 2] The flow rate metering device characterized by having a 1st leakage point decision means to be a flow rate metering device according to claim 1, and to judge that leakage has arisen from said passage flow rate measurement means on the gas supply way of the downstream when said passage flow rate measurement means measures the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value after said leakage detection means detected gas leakage.

[Claim 3] The latching valve which intercepts the gas supply which is a flow rate metering device according to claim 1, and leads said gas supply way to said combustor by valve-closing, The valve-closing control means by which said leakage detection means controls said latching valve to valve-closing while detecting gas leakage, the time check of the 2nd predetermined time is started during valve-closing control of said latching valve by said valve-closing control means -- with a means the 2nd **** said said time check according to a means the 2nd **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which ** (ed) with said gas temperature said said time check according to a means the 2nd **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of termination said time check -- the flow rate metering device characterized by equipping said leakage point with a 2nd leakage point decision means to judge the upstream and the downstream from said latching valve, based on whether the value which was detected at the time of termination, and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is equal.

[Claim 4] The latching valve which intercepts the gas supply which is a flow rate metering device according to claim 1, and leads said gas supply way to said combustor by valve-closing, The valve-closing control means by which said gas leakage detection means controls said latching valve to valve-closing while detecting gas leakage, The flow rate metering device characterized by having a 2nd leakage point decision means by which said leakage point judges the upstream and the downstream from said latching valve based on change of the detected gas pressure during valve-closing control of said latching valve by said valve-closing control means.

[Claim 5] When said passage flow rate measurement means measures the passage flow rate beyond a

predetermined value after it is a flow rate metering device according to claim 3 or 4 and said leakage detection means detected gas leakage, It has further a 1st leakage point detection means to judge that leakage has arisen from said passage flow rate measurement means on the gas supply way of the downstream. Said valve-closing control means The flow rate metering device characterized by controlling said latching valve to valve-closing while said leakage detection means is detecting gas leakage and said passage flow rate measurement means is not measuring the passage flow rate beyond said predetermined value.

[Claim 6] claims 1-5 -- the flow rate metering device which is a flow rate metering device any or given in 1 term, and is characterized by diverting the temperature detection means for fluctuation amendment of said passage flow rate depending on said gas temperature as said temperature detection means. [Claim 7] A use decision means to judge whether the combustor with which gas is supplied through a gas supply way is using gas, A temperature detection means to detect the gas temperature in said gas supply way, and a pressure detection means to detect the gas pressure in said gas supply way, said use decision means starts the time check of the 1st predetermined time during decision with no -- with a means the 1st **** said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which **(ed) with said gas temperature said said time check -- the leakage detection equipment characterized by having a leakage detection means to detect gas leakage when the value which was detected at the time of termination, and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is not equal.

[Translation done.]

* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

detected in this case.

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates to the flow rate metering device equipped with the function to detect the gas leakage in a gas supply way, and the leakage detection equipment which detects the gas leakage in a gas supply way.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] As a flow rate metering device incorporating the above-mentioned leakage detection equipment, the gas interrupting device as shown in JP,10-288337,A is proposed. This gas interrupting device detects gas leakage, when gas pressure changes during cutoff of the gas supply way by the latching valve exceeding a predetermined value, or when the flow of gas is detected. [0003] Moreover, leakage detection equipment as shown in JP,9-72500,A is also proposed. This leakage detection equipment detects leakage, when a pressure sensor is installed in two places estranged mutually and that differential pressure exceeds a predetermined value at the time of gas intact. [0004]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] By the way, in a gas supply way, if gas temperature changes even if it is the case where gas leakage has not arisen on a gas supply way even if, gas pressure will also change with this change. Moreover, gas may flow locally by this gas pressure change. For this reason, the gas interrupting device of above-mentioned JP,10-288337,A had the problem that neither the gas pressure change accompanying gas-temperature change nor flow of gas could be incorrect-detected with what is depended on gas leakage, and gas leakage could not be detected correctly.

[0005] on the other hand -- the leakage detection equipment of JP,9-72500,A -- if it is and gas temperature differs by the installation of a pressure sensor estranged mutually, for example, although gas leakage has not arisen, the differential pressure beyond a predetermined value arises among both pressure sensors according to this temperature gradient. Therefore, the above-mentioned leakage detection equipment had the problem that it could not incorrect-detect with what depends this differential pressure by the temperature gradient on gas leakage, and gas leakage could not be correctly

[0006] Then, this invention makes it a technical problem to offer the flow rate metering device which aimed at improvement in leakage detection precision, and leakage detection equipment by detecting gas leakage correctly, without being influenced of gas temperature paying attention to the above troubles. [0007]

[Means for Solving the Problem] Invention according to claim 1 made in order to solve the above-mentioned technical problem In the flow rate metering device equipped with passage flow rate measurement means 5a-1 which measures the passage flow rate of the gas which is formed all over the gas supply way 10, and is supplied to a combustor through said gas supply way as shown in the basic block diagram of <u>drawing 1</u> Use decision means 5a-2 which judge whether said combustor is using said gas, A temperature detection means 15 to detect the gas temperature in said gas supply way, and a pressure detection means 16 to detect the gas pressure in said gas supply way, said use decision means

starts the time check of the 1st predetermined time during decision with no -- with means 5a-3 the 1st
**** said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of
initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which **
(ed) with said gas temperature said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas
pressure detected at the time of termination -- said time check -- when the value which was detected at
the time of termination and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is not equal, it consists in the flow
rate metering device characterized by having leakage detection means 5a-4 which detect gas leakage.
[0008] According to invention according to claim 1, a means starts [a use decision means] the time
check of the 1st predetermined time the 1st **** during decision with no. a leakage detection means -{-- a time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure (the following, P1) / time check
detected at the time of initiation -- gas-temperature (following, T1)}!= which detected at the time of
initiation -- {-- a time check according to a means the 1st **** -- the gas pressure (the following, P2)/the
time check which detected at the time of termination -- gas leakage detects at the time of gastemperature (following, T2)} which detected at the time of termination.

[0009] therefore, a time check according to a means the 1st **** when it is inside at the time of gas intact and there is no gas leakage -- the atmosphere in the gas supply way at the time of initiation -- a product V1 and a time check -- the atmosphere at the time of termination -- a product V2 is equal (**V1=V2). Moreover, a formula (1) is materialized based on Boyle Charles's principle. (P1 and V1) /T1=(P2, V2)/T2=K (K is a constant) -- (1)

It is among gas intact, and when there is no gas leakage, it can draw that P1, T1, P2, and T2 become the relation of a formula (2) shown below from the above thing. P1/T1=P2/T1 -- (2)

On the other hand, since the gas volume V1 and V2 becomes less equal when gas leakage arises (**V1> V2), the relation of formula (2) ' can be drawn.

P1/T1 !=P2/T2 -- (2) ' [0010] Gas leakage can be detected correctly, without being influenced of gastemperature change by detecting gas leakage paying attention to the above formula (2) and (2) ' at the time of P1/T1 !=P2/T2.

[0011] When said passage flow rate measurement means measures the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value after it is a flow rate metering device according to claim 1 and said leakage detection means detected gas leakage, as invention according to claim 2 was shown in the basic block diagram of <u>drawing 1</u>, the 1st judged that leakage has arisen from said passage flow rate measurement means on the gas supply way of the downstream -- it consists in the flow rate metering device characterized by having leakage point decision means 5a-5.

[0012] When according to invention according to claim 2 a passage flow rate measurement means detects the passage flow rate for example, more than 3 L/h (= predetermined value) after the leakage detection means detected gas leakage, the 1st leakage location decision means judges that leakage has arisen from the passage flow rate measurement means on the gas supply way of the downstream. Therefore, when a leakage detection means detects gas leakage with the 1st leakage location decision means, the leakage point can be pinpointed.

[0013] The latching valve 20 which intercepts the gas supply which is a flow rate metering device according to claim 1, and leads said gas supply way to said combustor by valve-closing as invention according to claim 3 is shown in the basic block diagram of <u>drawing 1</u>, Valve-closing control means 5a-6 by which said leakage detection means controls said latching valve to valve-closing while detecting gas leakage, the time check of the 2nd predetermined time is started during valve-closing control of said latching valve by said valve-closing control means -- with means 5a-7 the 2nd **** said said time check according to a means the 2nd **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which **(ed) with said gas temperature said said time check according to a means the 2nd **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of termination said time check -- the 2nd said leakage point judges the upstream and the downstream to be from said latching valve based on whether the value which was detected at the time of termination, and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is equal -- it consists in the flow rate metering

device characterized by having leakage point decision means 5a-8.

[0014] According to invention according to claim 3, during detection of the gas leakage by the leakage detection means, a valve-closing control means makes a latching valve valve-closing, and intercepts the gas supply which leads the gas supply way to a combustor. A means starts the time check of the 2nd predetermined time the 2nd **** during valve-closing control of the latching valve by the valve-closing control means. a time check according [the 2nd leakage point decision means] to a means the 2nd **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- a time check -- the value which **(ed) with the gas temperature detected at the time of initiation, and a time check according to a means the 2nd **** -- the gas pressure which detected at the time of termination -- a time check -- a leakage point judges the upstream and the downstream from a latching valve based on whether the value which was detected at the time of termination and which **(ed) with gas temperature is equal. Therefore, when a leakage detection means detects gas leakage with the 2nd leakage point decision means, the leakage point can be pinpointed.

[0015] The latching valve which intercepts the gas supply which invention according to claim 4 is a flow rate metering device according to claim 1, and leads said gas supply way to said combustor by valve-closing, The valve-closing control means by which said gas leakage detection means controls said latching valve to valve-closing while detecting gas leakage, It consists in the flow rate metering device characterized by having a 2nd leakage point decision means by which said leakage point judges the upstream and the downstream from said latching valve based on change of the detected gas pressure during valve-closing control of said latching valve by said valve-closing control means. [0016] According to invention according to claim 4, during detection of the gas leakage by the leakage detection means, a valve-closing control means carries out valve-closing of the latching valve, and that intercepts ****** through the gas supply way to a combustor. Based on change of the gas pressure which the 2nd leakage point decision means detected during valve-closing control, a leakage point judges the upstream and the downstream from a latching valve. Therefore, when a leakage detection means detects gas leakage with the 2nd leakage point decision means, the leakage point can be pinpointed.

[0017] When said passage flow rate measurement means measures the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value after it is a flow rate metering device according to claim 3 or 4 and said leakage detection means detected gas leakage, as invention according to claim 5 was shown in the basic block diagram of drawing 1, It has leakage point detection means 5a-4 further, the 1st which judges that leakage has arisen from said passage flow rate measurement means on the gas supply way of the downstream -- said valve-closing control means While said leakage detection means is detecting gas leakage and said passage flow rate measurement means is not measuring the passage flow rate beyond said predetermined value, it consists in the flow rate metering device characterized by controlling said latching valve to valve-closing.

[0018] there is a limit in the measurement precision of a passage flow rate measurement means, for example, smaller than a predetermined value according to invention according to claim 5, -- a very small passage flow rate is overly immeasurable. for this reason, while the passage flow rate detection means is not measuring the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value, leakage has produced the 1st leakage point decision means in the upstream from the passage flow rate measurement means -- or it cannot distinguish [smaller than a predetermined value] whether leakage of a very small passage flow rate has overly arisen by the downstream, and a leakage point cannot be pinpointed. On the other hand, although the 2nd leakage point decision means can perform the above-mentioned distinction, since it needs to intercept a gas shut off valve, during cutoff, a combustor cannot be immediately used for it.
[0019] Only while a leakage detection means is detecting gas leakage and the passage flow rate measurement means is not measuring the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value by the valve-closing control means paying attention to the above thing, valve-closing of the latching valve is carried out.

[0020] invention according to claim 6 -- claims 1-5 -- it is a flow rate metering device any or given in 1 term, and consists in the flow rate metering device characterized by diverting the temperature detection

means for fluctuation amendment of said passage flow rate depending on said gas temperature as said temperature detection means.

[0021] Since the temperature detection means for fluctuation amendment of the passage flow rate depending on gas temperature is diverted as a temperature detection means according to invention according to claim 6, it is not necessary to establish separately the temperature detection means for amendment, and the temperature detection means for gas leakage detection.

[0022] Use decision means 5a-2, as for invention according to claim 7, the combustor with which gas is supplied through the gas supply way 10 judges it to be whether gas is used or not, A temperature detection means 15 to detect the gas temperature in said gas supply way, and a pressure detection means 16 to detect the gas pressure in said gas supply way, said use decision means starts the time check of the 1st predetermined time during decision with no -- with means 5a-3 the 1st **** said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of initiation -- said time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which **(ed) with said gas temperature said said time check according to a means the 1st **** -- said gas pressure detected at the time of termination -- said time check -- when the value which was detected at the time of termination and which **(ed) with said gas temperature is not equal, it consists in the leakage detection equipment characterized by having leakage detection means 5a-4 which detect gas leakage.

[0023] According to invention according to claim 7, a means starts [a use decision means] the time check of the 1st predetermined time the 1st **** during decision with no. a time check according [a leakage detection means] to a means the 1st **** -- the gas pressure (the following, P1) detected at the time of initiation -- a time check -- with the value which was detected at the time of initiation and which **(ed) with gas temperature (the following, T1) a time check according to a means the 1st **** -- the gas pressure (the following, P2) detected at the time of termination -- a time check -- gas leakage is detected when the value which was detected at the time of termination and which **(ed) with gas temperature (the following, T2) is not equal. Therefore, gas leakage can be detected correctly, without being influenced of gas-temperature change by detecting gas leakage at the time of P1/T1!=P2/T2.

[Embodiment of the Invention] Hereafter, the gestalt of 1 implementation of this invention is explained with reference to a drawing. Drawing 2 shows the gas supply system constituted by the gas meter incorporating the flow rate metering device of this invention. The gas supply system consists of the LP chemical cylinder 80 which supplies high pressure gas, a regulator 82 which decompresses the high pressure gas supplied from the LP chemical cylinder 80 through the high-pressure piping section 81, a gas meter 83 which measures the flow rate of the gas supplied from a regulator 82, and a combustor 84 which consumes gas.

[0025] <u>Drawing 3</u> shows the above-mentioned gas meter 83. The gas meter of illustration is constituted as a heat type, is arranged in the gas supply way which passes gas, and has the micro flow sensor 1 which outputs the signal according to the rate of flow of gas. In addition, as this micro flow sensor 1, what can detect the passage flow rate of 3 or more L/H is used.

[0026] This micro flow sensor 1 is arranged by the wall of the gas supply way 10 shown in respect of the <u>drawing 4</u> interruption. The semi-conductor pedestal 11, the temperature sensors 12 and 13, such as a thermopile which generates the thermoelectromotive force according to the temperature formed on the thin film layer which is not illustrated [which was formed on this semi-conductor pedestal 11], and this thin film layer, -- and It has the heater resistor 14 for heating, and is arranged at equal intervals along with flow direction D in order of the temperature sensor 12, the heater resistor 14, and the temperature sensor 13 from the upstream of flow direction D of the gas which flows the inside of the gas supply way 10. The micro flow sensor 1 is equipped with the temperature sensor 15 as a temperature detection means to measure the temperature of the gas which passes through the gas supply way 10 again. [0027] The heater resistor 14 mentioned above is connected with the power source 3 through the switch 2, as shown in <u>drawing 3</u>. The power source 3 has the dc-battery 31 and the voltage stabilizer 33, as shown in <u>drawing 5</u>, it is constituted so that the electrical potential difference of the power from a dc-battery 31 may be outputted as a predetermined constant voltage by the voltage stabilizer 33, turns on a

switch 2 according to the output of the control signal S1 from a microcomputer (henceforth, muCOM) 5, and impresses the predetermined constant voltage of a power source 3 to the heater resistor 14. That is, the heater resistor 14 is energized by the driving pulse outputted according to the control signal S1 from muCOM5, and is heated. in addition, everything but the constant-voltage control mentioned above as a power source 3 -- a current regulator circuit -- constant -- warming -- whenever -- various control, such as whenever [constant temperature], -- it is.

[0028] Moreover, when a thermopile is used as temperature sensors 12 and 13, as thermoelectromotive force shown in the representative circuit schematic of <u>drawing 5</u>, after noninverting magnification is carried out through non-inversed amplifying circuits 17 and 18, the signal according to a mutual difference is outputted by the differential amplifier 19, respectively.

[0029] The principle of the micro flow sensor 1 of a configuration of having mentioned above is explained below. The heater resistor 14 is energized by the driving pulse from muCOM5 to the output and coincidence of a control signal S1, and heating of predetermined time is performed. Consequently, while gas is not flowing on the gas supply way 10, as for the temperature distribution of the upstream propagation and near [heater resistor 14] this, and the downstream, heat becomes symmetrical distribution into the gas of the heater resistor 14 neighborhood. That is, since the temperature of temperature sensors 12 and 13 rises to equal temperature, the thermoelectromotive force of temperature sensors 12 and 13 becomes almost equal, and the output from the differential amplifier 19 is set to about 0

[0030] While the heater resistor 14 is energizing now, if gas flows to flow direction D of the gas of drawing 4, it will be cooled and the upstream will be lowered. On the other hand, the downstream carries out the medium of the flow of gas, and from the heater resistor 14, heat conduction is promoted and it carries out a temperature up. Consequently, since the temperature sensor 12 in the upstream of the heater resistor 14 is lowered by gas, thermoelectromotive force decreases, and since the temperature up of the temperature sensor 13 which is in the downstream on the other hand is carried out by gas, thermoelectromotive force increases it. If the rate of flow increases, since the amount of [a part mentioned above in connection with this lowered the temperature and] temperature up will also mentioned above in connection with this lowered the temperature and] temperature up will also increase, the output from the differential amplifier 19 which is the difference of the thermoelectromotive force of temperature sensors 12 and 13 turns into an output according to the rate of flow. And after the signal from the differential amplifier 19 of the micro flow sensor 1 according to the rate of flow of this gas is amplified with amplifier 6, it is supplied to muCOM5.

[0031] Central-process unit (CPU) 5a to which muCOM5 mentioned above performs various kinds of processings according to a program, ROM5b which is the read-only memory which stored the program of the processing which CPU5a performs etc., The work area used by various kinds of processing processes in CPU5a, 5d of A/D converters which carry out the analog / digital conversion of the signal which amplified the signal from RAM5c which is the memory which has the data storage area which stores various data, and in which read-out writing is free, and the micro flow sensor 1 with amplifier 6 etc. is built in. It interconnects by the bus line which these do not illustrate.

[0032] The above-mentioned gas meter was further prepared in the upstream from the pressure sensor 16, and the above-mentioned micro flow sensor 1 and pressure sensor 16 as a pressure detection means to detect the pressure of the gas in the gas supply way 10, and is equipped with the latching valve 20 which intercepts the gas supply which leads the gas supply way 10 to a combustor 84 by valve-closing. Which intercepts the gas supply which leads the gas pressure of 10Pa or less is used, for example. In addition, as a pressure sensor, what can detect the gas pressure of 10Pa or less is used, for example. [0033] CPU5a in muCOM5 outputs a control signal S1 intermittently, energizes the heater resistor 14 by the driving pulse, and performs passage flow rate measurement processing which measures the passage flow rate of the gas which flows the gas supply way 10 based on the magnification signal of the analog from the amplifier 6 according to the rate of flow of the gas outputted by energization.

[0034] CPU5a performs use decision processing in which it judges whether gas is used or not, based on the above-mentioned passage flow rate. Specifically, CPU5a judges that gas is not used, when the measured passage flow rate is less than 21 L/h. CPU5a starts the time check of predetermined time again, when judged as no by the above-mentioned use decision processing -- it processes the 1st ****.

CPU5a performs gas leakage detection processing in which gas leakage on the gas supply way 10 mentioned further later is detected.

[0035] Hereafter, the detail of the above-mentioned gas leakage detection processing is explained. It is among gas intact, and when there is no gas leakage, the gas volume in the gas supply way 10 carried out before and after the above-mentioned predetermined time phase does not change. namely, a time check according to processing the 1st **** - the atmosphere at the time of initiation -- a product V1 and a time check -- the atmosphere at the time of termination -- a product V2 is equal (**V1=V2). Moreover, a formula (1) is materialized based on Boyle Charles's principle. [0036]

V1 [P1 and]/T1=P2 and V2-/T2=K (K is a constant) -- (1)

P1 [however,] -- a time check -- the gas pressure at the time of initiation -- P2 -- a time check -- the gas pressure at the time of termination -- T1 -- a time check -- the gas temperature at the time of initiation --T2 -- a time check -- the gas temperature at the time of termination is shown respectively. [0037] It is among gas intact, and when there is no gas leakage, it can draw that P1, T1, P2, and T2 become the relation of a formula (2) shown below from the above thing.

On the other hand, since the gas volume V1 and V2 becomes less equal when gas leakage arises (**V1> V2), the relation of formula (2) ' can be drawn.

P1/T1 !=P2/T2 -- (2) ' [0038] Therefore, paying attention to a formula (2) and (2) ', gas leakage is detected in the above-mentioned gas leakage detection processing at the time of P1/T1 !=P2/T2. Thus, gas leakage can be detected correctly, without being influenced of gas-temperature change by detecting gas leakage using (2) and (2) 'containing gas temperature.

[0039] CPU 5 a carries out the alarm-display processing to which the alarm that is shown displays on a display 7, when addition value display processing and the gas leakage to which the flow rate addition value which calculated by flow rate addition processing in_which integrate the passage flow rate calculated by passage flow rate measurement processing other than the processing mentioned above, and an addition flow rate is calculated, and this flow rate addition processing displays on a display 7 are

[0040] Detailed actuation of the gas meter incorporating the flow rate metering device roughly explained above is explained below with reference to the flow chart of drawing 6 which shows the procedure of CPU5a. First, CPU5a progresses to the first step S1, after performing initial setting of various kinds of area which formed actuation in RAM5c in muCOM5 in the initial step which is not started and illustrated for example, by cell powering on.

[0041] First, CPU5a works as a passage flow rate measurement means, incorporates the signal according to the flow rate outputted from amplifier 6, and performs passage flow rate measurement processing which measures the passage flow rate of gas from this incorporated signal (step S1). Then, CPU5a performs amendment processing which amends a changed part of the measured passage flow rate which is changed depending on gas temperature based on the gas temperature which the temperature sensor 15

[0042] Next, CPÚ5a works as a use decision means, and judges whether gas is used with the combustor 84 based on the passage flow rate amended by the above-mentioned amendment processing (step S3). It specifically judges by whether a passage flow rate is 21 or more L/H, it judges that gas will be used if a passage flow rate is 21 or more L/H (it is Y at step S3), and progresses to step S4 and 5. [0043] In continuing step S4 and 5, CPU5a processes at the time of the addition surface of the earth

which displays the addition value on a drop 7 while performing passage flow rate addition processing which integrates a passage flow rate. On the other hand, if a passage flow rate is less than 21 L/H, it will judge that gas is not used and will progress to leakage detection processing of step S6 mentioned later. [0044] Hereafter, the detail of the above-mentioned leakage detection processing is explained with reference to the flow chart which shows the procedure of CPU5a of drawing 7 and drawing 8. First, CPU5a is respectively stored in the last temperature area T1 and the total-pressure force area P1 in which the gas temperature which the temperature sensor 15 and the pressure sensor 16 detected, and gas pressure were formed in RAM5c (step S61). next, the time check which CPU5a committed as a means the 1st ****, and was formed in RAM5c -- area t1 is incremented (step S62), and the time check of predetermined time is started.

predetermined time is started.

[0045] then, CPU5a -- as a leakage detection means -- working -- a time check -- area t1 -predetermined time -- becoming (it being Y at step S63) -- a time check -- if it is judged that
predetermined time progress was carried out from initiation, after forming the gas temperature and gas
pressure which the temperature sensor 15 and the pressure sensor 16 detected in RAM5c, they are
pressure which the temperature area T1 and the back pressure area P2 (step S64). The gas
respectively stored in the temperature area T1 and the back pressure and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time
temperature and gas pressure which were detected by carrying out before and after a predetermined time

[0046] Then, CPU5a judges whether P1/T1=P2/T2 (the ** above-mentioned type (2)) is materialized (step S65). And if, as for CPU5a, the above-mentioned formula (2) is materialized (it is Y at step S65), it will judge that it is not generated by gas leakage and it will carry out a return. On the other hand, when will judge that it is not generated by gas leakage and it will carry out a return. On the other hand, when the above-mentioned formula (2) is not materialized, it judges that gas leakage has arisen and alarm the above-mentioned formula (2) is not materialized, it judges that is performed (step S66). display processing which displays on a drop 7 warning which tells that is performed (step S66). [0047] And since it works as a 1st leakage point decision means and a gas leakage point is pinpointed, the passage flow rate Qi of gas is measured again, and it judges whether the measured passage flow rate Qi is 3 or more L/H, it judges that Qi is 3 or more L/H (step S67). When the measured passage flow rate Qi is 3 or more L/H, it judges that Qi is 3 or more L/H (step S67). When the measured passage flow rate Qi is 3 or more L/H, it judges that Qi is 3 or more L/H (step S67). When the micro flow sensor 1 83, i.e., a gas meter, on the gas a gas leakage point is located from Y) and the micro flow sensor 1 83, i.e., a gas meter, on the gas a gas leakage point is located from Y) and the micro flow sensor 1 83, i.e., a gas meter, on the gas a gas leakage point is located from Y) and the micro flow sensor 1 83, i.e., a gas meter, on the gas a gas leakage point is located from Y) and the display which tells that is displayed on a drop supply way 10 of the downstream at the (step S67, and the display which tells that is displayed on a drop 7 (step S68).

[0048] On the other hand, when the passage flow rate Qi of gas is less than 3 L/H, whether gas leakage has arisen by the upstream from Y) and a gas meter 83 at the (step S67 or the gas leakage of a superminute amount of less than 3 L/H has arisen in the downstream from the gas meter 83, and since it specifies it progresses to step S69 of drawing 8

[0049] In step S69 of drawing 8, CPU5a performs valve-closing control processing which was made into the valve-closing control means and to which it works, a valve-closing control signal is outputted to a latching valve 20, and valve-closing of the latching valve 20 is carried out. Then, the same actuation as a latching valve 20, and valve-closing of the latching valve again whether gas leakage has occurred. The above-mentioned step S61-65 is performed, and it judges again whether gas leakage has occurred. As mentioned above, it can judge whether gas leakage has occurred in the downstream from the latching valve 20 83, i.e., a gas meter, by making into valve-closing the latching valve 20 which is in the valve 20 83, i.e., a gas meter, by making into valve-closing the downstream from the gas meter 83 in

[0050] And CPU5a judges that gas leakage has occurred in the downstream from the gas meter 83 in decision of step S65 of <u>drawing 8</u> when P1/T1=P2/T2 are abortive (it is N at step S65 of <u>drawing 8</u>), and displays that with a drop 7 (step S71). On the other hand, when P1/T1=P2/T2 are materialized (it is Y at step S65 of <u>drawing 8</u>), it judges that gas leakage has occurred in the upstream, and that is displayed with a drop 7 (step S70)

[0051] clear from actuation of CPU5a explaining the flow chart of drawing 8 mentioned above -- as -- CPU5a -- the 2nd time check -- it turns out that it works as a means and a 2nd leakage decision means. [0052] Thus, in case a gas company member checks by pinpointing not only the existence of gas leakage [0052] Thus, in case a gas company member checks by pinpointing not only the existence of gas leakage [0052] Thus, in case a gas company member checks by pinpointing not only the existence of gas leakage but its leakage point, and displaying on a drop 7 in a gas leakage point, it can carry out to easy and a short time.

[0053] Moreover, after gas leakage detection, in step S67 of drawing 7, when the passage flow rate Qi cannot measure 3 or more L/H, the flow rate metering device mentioned above is begun, intercepts a latching valve 20, and pinpoints the gas leakage point. When the flow rate metering device of this invention can pinpoint a gas leakage point by doing in this way based on a passage flow rate, a latching valve 20 is not intercepted and valve-closing of the latching valve 20 is not carried out recklessly. Valve 20 is not intercepted and valve-closing device mentioned above is making the temperature sensor [0054] Furthermore, the flow rate metering device mentioned above is making the temperature sensor for gas leakage detection serve a double purpose. Thus, it is for amendment, and the temperature sensor separately, respectively, and a cost cut can be aimed at by not necessary to form a temperature sensor separately, respectively, and a cost cut can be aimed at by

[0055] In addition, with the operation gestalt mentioned above, it judged whether after gas leakage detection, Qi intercepted the latching valve 20, only when a passage flow rate was not 3 or more L/H in step S67 of drawing 7, and gas leakage would have occurred in the downstream from the gas meter using a formula (2) again. However, if the pressure sensor 16 is the thing of high degree of accuracy (resolution of 10Pa or less) as mentioned above, for example, pressure drawdown will be judged after cutoff of a latching valve 20, and if pressure drawdown occurs, as long as there will not be downstream leakage and descent, you may make it judge upstream leakage and a gas leakage part. [0056] However, it is better to judge [as mentioned above,] a gas leakage part by the approach of judging a gas leakage part, using a formula (2) only based on gas pressure, again like the abovementioned operation gestalt for a certain reason, also when it cannot be influenced of a temperature change as already mentioned above, and a gas leakage part cannot be judged correctly. [0057] Moreover, although the gas leakage point is judged after gas leakage detection based on the passage flow rate Qi, a latching valve 20 is intercepted immediately and you may make it judge a gas leakage point after gas leakage detection with the operation gestalt mentioned above based on a formula (2) or pressure variation. However, since the latching valve 20 is intercepted in this case, un-arranging [that it cannot be used shortly after a consumer considers gas as use at this time] arises. For this reason, it is better to intercept like the above-mentioned operation gestalt, when it cannot judge only by the passage flow rate Qi, and to have made it judge.

[Effect of the Invention] Since gas leakage can be correctly detected according to invention claim 1 and given in seven, without being influenced of gas-temperature change as explained above, the flow rate metering device and leakage detection equipment which aimed at improvement in leakage detection precision can be obtained.

[0059] Since according to invention claims 2 and 3 and given in four the leakage point can be pinpointed when a leakage detection means detects gas leakage with the 1st leakage location decision means, the flow rate metering device which can perform the check of a gas leakage point in a short time easily can be obtained.

easily can be obtained.

[0060] Since valve-closing of the latching valve is carried out only while according to invention according to claim 5 a leakage detection means is detecting gas leakage and the passage flow rate according to claim 5 a leakage detection means is detecting gas leakage and the passage flow rate measurement means is not measuring the passage flow rate beyond a predetermined value by the valve-closing control means, the flow rate metering device with which valve-closing of the gas shut off valve is not carried out recklessly can be obtained.

is not carried out recklessly can be obtained. [0061] According to invention according to claim 6, since it is not necessary to establish separately the temperature detection means for amendment, and the temperature detection means for gas leakage detection, the flow rate metering device aiming at a cost cut can be obtained.

[Translation done.]

* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original precisely.
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] It is the basic block diagram of the flow rate metering device incorporating the leakage detection equipment of this invention.

[Drawing 2] It is drawing showing a gas supply system.

[Drawing 3] It is drawing showing the gestalt of 1 operation of the gas meter incorporating the flow rate metering device and leakage detection equipment of this invention.

[Drawing 4] It is drawing showing the detail of the micro flow sensor of drawing 3.

[Drawing 5] It is the circuit diagram showing the detail of the micro flow sensor of drawing 3.

<u>[Drawing 6]</u> It is a flow chart to show the procedure of CPU which constitutes the gas meter of <u>drawing 3</u>.

[Drawing 7] It is the flow chart which shows the procedure of CPU about the leakage detection processing shown in drawing 6.

[Drawing 8] It is the flow chart which shows the procedure of CPU about the leakage detection processing shown in drawing 6.

[Description of Notations]

- 5a-1 Passage flow rate measurement means (CPU)
- 5a-2 Use decision means (CPU)
- 5a-3 It is a means (CPU) the 1st ****.
- 5a-4 Leakage detection means (CPU)
- 5a-5 The 1st leakage point decision means (CPU)
- 5a-6 Valve-closing control means (CPU)
- 5a-7 It is a means (CPU) the 2nd ****.
- 5a-8 The 2nd leakage point decision means (CPU)
- 10 Gas Supply Way
- 15 Temperature Detection Means (Temperature Sensor)
- 16 Pressure Detection Means (Pressure Sensor)
- 20 Latching Valve
- 84 Combustor

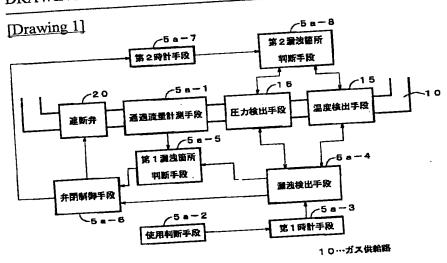
[Translation done.]

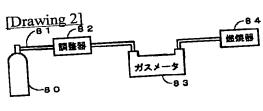
* NOTICES *

JPO and NCIPI are not responsible for any damages caused by the use of this translation.

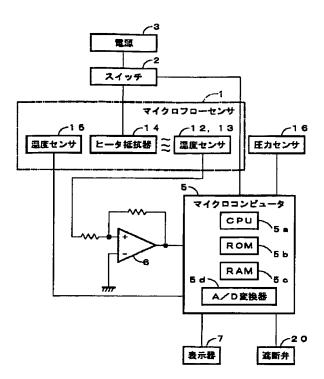
- 1. This document has been translated by computer. So the translation may not reflect the original
- 2.**** shows the word which can not be translated.
- 3.In the drawings, any words are not translated.

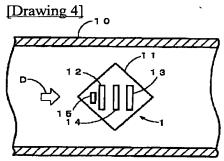
DRAWINGS

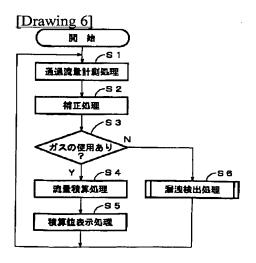




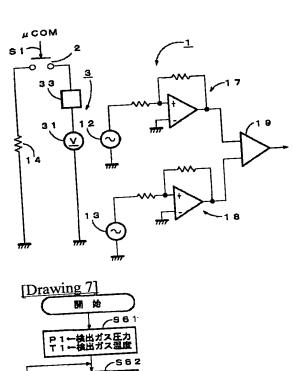
[Drawing 3]

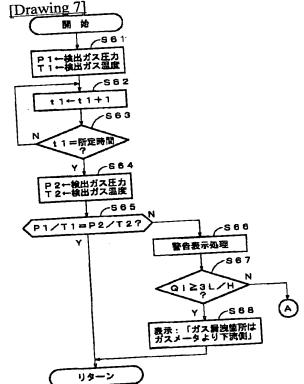




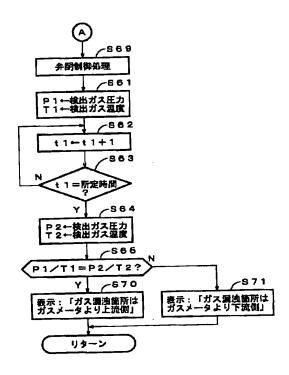


[Drawing 5]





[Drawing 8]



[Translation done.]

(19)日本国特許庁 (JP)

(12) 公開特許公報(A)

(11)特許出願公開番号 特開2002-168663

(P2002-168663A)

最終頁に続く

(43)公開日 平成14年6月14日(2002.6.14)

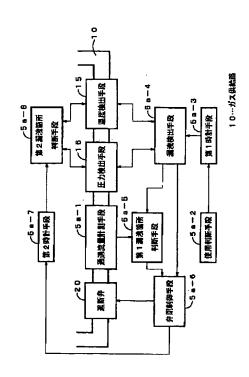
(51) Int.Cl.7		識別記号	FΙ			テーマコード(参考)	
G01F	1/00		G01F	1/00		T 2F030	
	1/696		:	3/22		B 2F035	
	3/22		G01M	3/28		B 2G067	
G 0 1 M	3/28		G 0 1 F	1/68	201	В	
			審査請求	未蘭求	請求項の数7	OL (全 9 頁)	
(21)出願番号		特願2000-370066(P2000-370066)	(71)出顧人)出顧人 000006895			
				矢崎総業株式会社			
(22)出願日		平成12年12月 5日(2000.12.5)		東京都洋	8港区三田1丁目4番28号		
			(71)出願人	5000301	27		
		•		日本アス	プライ ドフロー	-株式会社	
		•		神奈川リ	具藤沢市みその)台9-10	
			(72)発明者	山下 2	3 功		
•				静岡県元	天竜市二俣町南	1鹿島23 矢崎計器株	
				式会社网	勺		
			(74)代理人	100060690			
				弁理士	瀧野 秀雄	(外3名)	
			I				

(54) 【発明の名称】 流量計測装置及び、漏洩検出装置

(57) 【要約】

【課題】 ガス温度の影響を受けることなく、正確にガス漏洩を検出することにより、漏洩検出精度の向上を図った流量計測装置及び、漏洩検出装置を提供する。

【解決手段】 使用判断手段5a-2が、否と判断中に、第1計時手段5a-3が、第1所定時間の計時を開始する。漏洩検出手段5a-4が、 (第1計時手段による計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力(以下、P1)/計時開始時に検出した、ガス温度(以下、T1)} ≠ (第1計時手段による計時終了時に検出した、ガス圧力(以下、P2)/計時終了時に検出した、ガス温度(以下、T2)}のとき、ガス漏洩を検出する。



【請求項1】 ガス供給路中に設けられ、前記ガス供給路を通じて燃焼器に供給されるガスの通過流量を計測する通過流量計測手段を備えた流量計測装置において、前記燃焼器が、前記ガスを使用しているか否かを判断する使用判断手段と、

前記ガス供給路内のガス温度を検出する温度検出手段 と、

前記ガス供給路内のガス圧力を検出する圧力検出手段と、

前記使用判断手段が、否と判断中に、第1所定時間の計 時を開始する第1計時手段と、

前記第1計時手段による前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値と、前記第1計時手段による前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値とが等しくないとき、ガス漏洩を検出する漏洩検出手段とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項2】 請求項1記載の流量計測装置であって、前記漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出した後に、前記通過流量計測手段が所定値以上の通過流量を計測したとき、前記通過流量計測手段より下流側のガス供給路で漏洩が生じていると判断する第1漏洩箇所判断手段とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項3】 請求項1記載の流量計測装置であって、 弁閉により前記燃焼器に対する前記ガス供給路を通じて のガス供給を遮断する遮断弁と、

前記漏洩検出手段が、ガス漏洩を検出中に、前記遮断弁 を弁閉に制御する弁閉制御手段と、

前記弁閉制御手段による前記遮断弁の弁閉制御中に、第 2所定時間の計時を開始する第2計時手段と、

前記第2計時手段による前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値と、前記第2計時手段による前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値とが等しいか否かに基づき、前記漏洩箇所が前記遮断弁より上流側か、下流側かを判断する第2漏洩箇所判断手段とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項4】 請求項1記載の流量計測装置であって、 弁閉により前記燃焼器に対する前記ガス供給路を通じて のガス供給を遮断する遮断弁と、

前記ガス漏洩検出手段が、ガス漏洩を検出中に、前記遮 断弁を弁閉に制御する弁閉制御手段と、

前記弁閉制御手段による前記遮断弁の弁閉制御中に、検 出したガス圧力の変化に基づき、前記漏洩箇所が前記遮 断弁より上流側か、下流側かを判断する第2漏洩箇所判 断手段とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項5】 請求項3又は4記載の流量計測装置であ 50

って、

前記漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出した後に、前記通過 流量計測手段が所定値以上の通過流量を計測したとき、 前記通過流量計測手段より下流側のガス供給路で漏洩が 生じていることを判断する第1漏洩箇所検出手段をさら に備え

前記弁閉制御手段は、前記漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検 出中であり、かつ前記通過流量計測手段が、前記所定値 以上の通過流量を計測していないとき、前記遮断弁を弁 閉に制御することを特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項6】 請求項1~5何れか1項記載の流量計測 装置であって、

前記温度検出手段として、前記ガス温度に依存する前記 通過流量の変動補正用の温度検出手段を流用することを 特徴とする流量計測装置。

【請求項7】 ガス供給路を通じてガスが供給される燃 焼器が、ガスを使用しているか否かを判断する使用判断 手段と、

前記ガス供給路内のガス温度を検出する温度検出手段 レ

前記ガス供給路内のガス圧力を検出する圧力検出手段 レ

前記使用判断手段が、否と判断中に、第1所定時間の計時を開始する第1計時手段と、

前記第1計時手段による前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値と、前記第1計時手段による前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値とが等しくないとき、ガス漏洩を検出する漏洩検出手段とを備えたことを特徴とする漏洩検出装置。

【発明の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【発明の属する技術分野】この発明は、ガス供給路中のガス漏洩を検出する機能を備えた流量計測装置及び、ガス供給路中のガス漏洩を検出する漏洩検出装置に関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】上記漏洩検出装置を組み込んだ流量計測 装置として、特開平10-288337号公報に示すよ うなガス遮断装置が提案されている。このガス遮断装置 は、遮断弁によるガス供給路の遮断中に、ガス圧力が所 定値を超えて変化したとき又は、ガスの流れが検出され たとき、ガス漏洩を検出するものである。

【0003】また、特開平9-72500号公報に示すような漏洩検出装置も提案されている。この漏洩検出装置は、互いに離間した2箇所に圧力センサを設置し、ガス未使用時に、その圧力差が所定値を超えたとき、漏洩を検出するものである。

[0004]

【発明が解決しようとする課題】ところで、ガス供給路 内では、たとえガス供給路にガス漏洩が生じていない場 合であっても、ガス温度が変化すると、この変化に伴い ガス圧力も変化してしまう。また、このガス圧力変化に より、局部的にガスが流れることもある。このため、上 記特開平10-288337号公報のガス遮断装置は、 ガス温度変化に伴うガス圧力変化や、ガスの流れを、ガ ス漏洩によるものと誤検出してしまい、正確にガス漏洩 を検出することができないという問題があった。

【0005】一方、特開平9-72500号の漏洩検出 装置おいては、例えば互いに離間した圧力センサの設置 場所でガス温度が異なれば、ガス漏洩が生じていないに も拘わらず、この温度差によって両圧力センサ間に所定 値以上の圧力差が生じる。従って、上記漏洩検出装置 は、温度差によるこの圧力差をガス漏洩によるものと誤 検出してしまい、この場合も正確にガス漏洩を検出する ことができないという問題があった。

【0006】そこで、本発明は、上記のような問題点に 着目し、ガス温度の影響を受けることなく、正確にガス 漏洩を検出することにより、漏洩検出精度の向上を図っ た流量計測装置及び、漏洩検出装置を提供することを課 題とする。

[0007]

【課題を解決するための手段】上記課題を解決するため になされた請求項1記載の発明は、図1の基本構成図に 示すように、ガス供給路10中に設けられ、前記ガス供 給路を通じて燃焼器に供給されるガスの通過流量を計測

$$(P1 \cdot V1) / T1 = (P2 \cdot$$

以上のことから、ガス未使用中であって、ガス漏れがな いときは、P1、T1、P2及びT2は以下に示す式 (2)の関係となることが導き出せる。

$P1/T1 = P2/T1 \cdots (2)$

一方、ガス漏れが生じると、ガス体積V1及びV2が等 しくなくなるため (: V1>V2)、式(2) / の関係 が導き出せる。

$P1/T1 \neq P2/T2 \cdots (2)'$

【0010】以上の式(2)及び(2)′に着目し、P 1/T1≠P2/T2のとき、ガス漏洩を検出すること により、ガス温度変化の影響を受けることなく、正確に ガス漏洩を検出することができる。

【0011】請求項2記載の発明は、図1の基本構成図 に示すように、請求項1記載の流量計測装置であって、 前記漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出した後に、前記通過 流量計測手段が所定値以上の通過流量を計測したとき、 前記通過流量計測手段より下流側のガス供給路で漏洩が 生じていると判断する第1漏洩箇所判断手段5a-5と を備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置に存する。

【0012】請求項2記載の発明によれば、漏洩検出手 段がガス漏洩を検出した後に、通過流量計測手段が例え ば3L/h (=所定値)以上の通過流量を検出したと

する通過流量計測手段 5 a - 1 を備えた流量計測装置に おいて、前記燃焼器が、前記ガスを使用しているか否か を判断する使用判断手段5a-2と、前記ガス供給路内 のガス温度を検出する温度検出手段15と、前記ガス供 給路内のガス圧力を検出する圧力検出手段16と、前記 使用判断手段が、否と判断中に、第1所定時間の計時を 開始する第1計時手段5a-3と、前記第1計時手段に よる前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記 計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値と、前 記第1計時手段による前記計時終了時に検出した、前記 ガス圧力を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス温度 で除した値とが等しくないとき、ガス漏洩を検出する漏 洩検出手段5a-4とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計 測装置に存する。

【0008】請求項1記載の発明によれば、使用判断手 段が、否と判断中に、第1計時手段が、第1所定時間の 計時を開始する。漏洩検出手段が、〈第1計時手段によ る計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力(以下、P1) /計時開始時に検出した、ガス温度(以下、T1) } ≠ {第1計時手段による計時終了時に検出した、ガス圧力 (以下、P2) /計時終了時に検出した、ガス温度(以 下、T2) } のとき、ガス漏洩を検出する。

【0009】従って、ガス未使用時中であって、ガス漏 れがないときは、第1計時手段による計時開始時のガス 供給路内のガス体積V1と、計時終了時のガス体積V2 とは等しい (∵V1=V2)。また、ボイル・シャルル の法則に基づき、式(1)が成立する。

(P1·V1) /T1=(P2·V2) /T2=K(Kは定数)…(1)

き、第1漏洩場所判断手段が、通過流量計測手段より下 流側のガス供給路で漏洩が生じていると判断する。従っ て、第1漏洩場所判断手段により、漏洩検出手段がガス 漏洩を検出したとき、その漏洩箇所を特定することがで きる。

【0013】請求項3記載の発明は、図1の基本構成図 に示すように、請求項1記載の流量計測装置であって、 弁閉により前記燃焼器に対する前記ガス供給路を通じて のガス供給を遮断する遮断弁20と、前記漏洩検出手段 が、ガス漏洩を検出中に、前記遮断弁を弁閉に制御する 弁閉制御手段5a-6と、前記弁閉制御手段による前記 遮断弁の弁閉制御中に、第2所定時間の計時を開始する 第2計時手段5a-7と、前記第2計時手段による前記 計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時開始 時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した値と、前記第2計 時手段による前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス圧力 を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した 値とが等しいか否かに基づき、前記漏洩箇所が前記遮断 弁より上流側か、下流側かを判断する第2漏洩筒所判断 手段5a-8とを備えたことを特徴とする流量計測装置 に存する。

【0014】請求項3記載の発明によれば、漏洩検出手

10

段によるガス漏洩の検出中に、弁閉制御手段が、遮断弁 を弁閉にして、燃焼器に対するガス供給路を通じてのガ ス供給を遮断する。第2計時手段が、弁閉制御手段によ る遮断弁の弁閉制御中に、第2所定時間の計時を開始す る。第2漏洩箇所判断手段が、第2計時手段による計時 開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力を、計時開始時に検出 したガス温度で除した値と、第2計時手段による計時終 了時に検出した、ガス圧力を、計時終了時に検出した、 ガス温度で除した値とが等しいか否かに基づき、漏洩箇 所が遮断弁より上流側か、下流側かを判断する。従っ て、第2漏洩箇所判断手段により、漏洩検出手段がガス 漏洩を検出したとき、その漏洩箇所を特定することがで

【0015】請求項4記載の発明は、請求項1記載の流 量計測装置であって、弁閉により前記燃焼器に対する前 記ガス供給路を通じてのガス供給を遮断する遮断弁と、 前記ガス漏洩検出手段が、ガス漏洩を検出中に、前記遮 断弁を弁閉に制御する弁閉制御手段と、前記弁閉制御手 段による前記遮断弁の弁閉制御中に、検出したガス圧力 の変化に基づき、前記漏洩箇所が前記遮断弁より上流側 か、下流側かを判断する第2漏洩箇所判断手段とを備え たことを特徴とする流量計測装置に存する。

【0016】請求項4記載の発明によれば、漏洩検出手 段によるガス漏洩の検出中に、弁閉制御手段が、遮断弁 を弁閉して、燃焼器に対するガス供給路を通じてのがす 供給を遮断する。第2漏洩箇所判断手段が、弁閉制御中 に、検出したガス圧力の変化に基づき、漏洩箇所が遮断 弁より上流側か、下流側かを判断する。従って、第2漏 洩箇所判断手段により、漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出 したとき、その漏洩箇所を特定することができる。

【0017】請求項5記載の発明は、図1の基本構成図 に示すように、請求項3又は4記載の流量計測装置であ って、前記漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出した後に、前 記通過流量計測手段が所定値以上の通過流量を計測した とき、前記通過流量計測手段より下流側のガス供給路で 漏洩が生じていることを判断する第1漏洩箇所検出手段 5a-4をさらに備え、前記弁閉制御手段は、前記漏洩 検出手段がガス漏洩を検出中であり、かつ前記通過流量 計測手段が、前記所定値以上の通過流量を計測していな いとき、前記遮断弁を弁閉に制御することを特徴とする 40 流量計測装置に存する。

【0018】請求項5記載の発明によれば、通過流量計 測手段の計測精度には限度があり、例えば所定値より小 さい超微少通過流量は計測することができない。このた め、第1漏洩箇所判断手段は、通過流量検出手段が、所 定値以上の通過流量を計測していないときは、通過流量 計測手段より上流側で漏洩が生じているのか、それとも 下流側で所定値より小さい超微少通過流量の漏洩が生じ ているのか区別できず、漏洩箇所を特定することができ

るが、ガス遮断弁を遮断する必要があるので、遮断中に は燃焼器をすぐに使用できない。

【0019】以上のことに着目し、弁閉制御手段によ り、漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出中であり、かつ通過 流量計測手段が、所定値以上の通過流量を計測していな いときのみ、遮断弁を弁閉される。

【0020】請求項6記載の発明は、請求項1~5何れ か1項記載の流量計測装置であって、前記温度検出手段 として、前記ガス温度に依存する前記通過流量の変動補 正用の温度検出手段を流用することを特徴とする流量計 測装置に存する。

【0021】請求項6記載の発明によれば、温度検出手 段として、ガス温度に依存する通過流量の変動補正用の 温度検出手段を流用しているので、補正用の温度検出手 段と、ガス漏洩検出用の温度検出手段とを別途に設ける 必要がない。

【0022】請求項7記載の発明は、ガス供給路10を 通じてガスが供給される燃焼器が、ガスを使用している か否かを判断する使用判断手段5a-2と、前記ガス供 給路内のガス温度を検出する温度検出手段15と、前記 ガス供給路内のガス圧力を検出する圧力検出手段16 と、前記使用判断手段が、否と判断中に、第1所定時間 の計時を開始する第1計時手段5a-3と、前記第1計 時手段による前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス圧力 を、前記計時開始時に検出した、前記ガス温度で除した 値と、前記第1計時手段による前記計時終了時に検出し た、前記ガス圧力を、前記計時終了時に検出した、前記 ガス温度で除した値とが等しくないとき、ガス漏洩を検 出する漏洩検出手段5a-4とを備えたことを特徴とす る漏洩検出装置に存する。

【0023】請求項7記載の発明によれば、使用判断手 段が、否と判断中に、第1計時手段が、第1所定時間の 計時を開始する。漏洩検出手段が、第1計時手段による 計時開始時に検出した、ガス圧力(以下、P1)を、計 時開始時に検出した、ガス温度(以下、T1)で除した 値と、第1計時手段による計時終了時に検出した、ガス 圧力(以下、P2)を、計時終了時に検出した、ガス温 度(以下、T2)で除した値とが等しくないとき、ガス 漏洩を検出する。従って、P1/T1≠P2/T2のと き、ガス漏洩を検出することにより、ガス温度変化の影 響を受けることなく、正確にガス漏洩を検出することが できる。

[0024]

【発明の実施の形態】以下、この発明の一実施の形態を 図面を参照して説明する。図2は、本発明の流量計測装 置を組み込んだガスメータにより構成されるガス供給シ ステムを示す。ガス供給システムは、例えば、高圧ガス を供給するLPガスボンベ80と、高圧配管部81を介 してLPガスボンベ80から供給された高圧ガスを減圧 ない。一方、第2漏洩箇所判断手段は、上記区別はでき 50 する調整器82と、調整器82から供給されるガスの流

給される。

量を計測するガスメータ83と、ガスを消費する燃焼器 84とから構成されている。

【0025】図3は上記ガスメータ83を示している。 図示のガスメータは熱式として構成されており、ガスを 流すガス供給路に配設され、ガスの流速に応じた信号を 出力するマイクロフローセンサ1を有する。なお、この マイクロフローセンサ1としては、3L/H以上の通過 流量が検出可能なものを使用している。

【0026】このマイクロフローセンサ1は、図4中断面で示すガス供給路10の内壁に配設されており、半導体基台11と、この半導体基台11上に形成された不図示の薄膜層と、この薄膜層上に形成された温度に応じた熱起電力を発生するサーモパイル等の温度センサ12、13及び、加熱用のヒータ抵抗器14とを備えており、ガス供給路10内を流れるガスの流れ方向Dの上流側から温度センサ12、ヒータ抵抗器14、温度センサ13の順に、流れ方向Dに沿って等間隔で配列されている。マイクロフローセンサ1はまた、ガス供給路10を通過するガスの温度を計測する温度検出手段としての温度センサ15とを備えている。

【0028】また、温度センサ12、13としてサーモパイルを使用したとき、それぞれ熱起電力は、図5の等価回路図で示すように、非反転増幅回路17、18を介して非反転増幅された後、差動増幅器19により互いの差に応じた信号が出力されている。

【0029】上述した構成のマイクロフローセンサ1の原理について以下説明する。ヒータ抵抗器14は、 μ C 40 OM5からの制御信号S1の出力と同時に駆動パルスにより通電され、所定時間の加熱が行われる。この結果、ガス供給路10にガスが流れていないときは、ヒータ抵抗器14付近の気体に熱が伝わり、該ヒータ抵抗器14付近の上流側、下流側の温度分布は対称分布になる。つまり、温度センサ12、13の温度が等しい温度に上昇するため温度センサ12、13の熱起電力はほぼ等しくなり差動増幅器19からの出力はほぼ0となる。

【0030】今、ヒータ抵抗器14が通電している間、 図4のガスの流れ方向Dにガスが流れると上流側は冷却 50

され降温する。一方、下流側はガスの流れを媒体してヒータ抵抗器 14 から熱伝導が促進され昇温する。この結果、ヒータ抵抗器 14 の上流側にある温度センサ 12 はガスにより降温されるため熱起電力が減少し、一方下流側にある温度センサ 13 はガスにより昇温されるため熱起電力が増加する。流速が増加すると、これに伴って上述した降温分と昇温分も増加するので、温度センサ 12、13 の熱起電力の差である差動増幅器 19 からの出力は流速に応じた出力となる。そして、このガスの流速に応じたマイクロフローセンサ 1 の差動増幅器 19 からの信号はアンプ 6 により増幅された後、 μ COM 5 に供

【0031】上述したμCOM5は、プログラムに従って各種の処理を行う中央処理ユニット(CPU)5a、CPU5aが行う処理のプログラムなどを格納した読み出し専用のメモリであるROM5b、CPU5aでの各種の処理過程で利用するワークエリア、各種データを格納するデータ格納エリアなどを有する読み出し書き込み自在のメモリであるRAM5c及びマイクロフローセンサ1からの信号をアンプ6で増幅した信号をアナログ/ディジタル変換するA/D変換器5dなどを内蔵し、これらが図示しないバスラインによって相互接続されている

【0032】上記ガスメータはさらに、ガス供給路10内のガスの圧力を検出する圧力検出手段としての圧力センサ16と、上記マイクロフローセンサ1及び圧力センサ16より上流側に設けられ、弁閉により燃焼器84に対するガス供給路10を通じてのガス供給を遮断する遮断弁20とを備えている。なお、圧力センサとしては、例えば、ガス圧力10Pa以下も検出可能なものを使用している。

【0033】 μ COM5内のCPU5 a は、間欠的に制御信号S1を出力してヒータ抵抗器14を駆動パルスにより通電し、通電により出力されるガスの流速に応じたアンプ6からのアナログの増幅信号に基づき、ガス供給路10を流れるガスの通過流量を計測する通過流量計測処理を行う。

【0034】CPU5aは、上記通過流量に基づき、ガスを使用しているか否かを判断する使用判断処理を行う。具体的には、CPU5aは、計測した通過流量が21L/h未満であるとき、ガスが使用されていないと判断する。CPU5aはまた、上記使用判断処理によって否と判断されたとき、所定時間の計時を開始する第1計時処理を行う。CPU5aは、さらに後述するガス供給路10でのガス漏洩を検出するガス漏洩検出処理を行う。

【0035】以下、上記ガス漏洩検出処理の詳細について説明する。ガス未使用中であって、ガス漏れがないときは、上記所定時間相前後するガス供給路10内のガス体積は変わることがない。即ち、第1計時処理による計

20

時開始時のガス体積V1と、計時終了時のガス体積V2 とは等しい (∵V1=V2)。また、ボイル・シャルル

P1·V1/T1=P2·V2/T2=K (Kは定数) ··· (1)

但し、P1は、計時開始時のガス圧力を、P2は、計時 終了時のガス圧力を、T1は、計時開始時のガス温度 を、T2は、計時終了時のガス温度を各々示す。

【0037】以上のことから、ガス未使用中であって、 ガス漏れがないときは、P1、T1、P2及びT2は以 下に示す式(2)の関係となることが導き出せる。

 $P1/T1 = P2/T2 \cdots (2)$

一方、ガス漏れが生じると、ガス体積V1及びV2が等 しくなくなるため (∵V1>V2)、式 (2) ′の関係 が導き出せる。

 $P1/T1 \neq P2/T2 \cdots (2)'$

【0038】従って、式(2)、(2)/に着目し、上 記ガス漏洩検出処理においては、P1/T1≠P2/T 2のとき、ガス漏洩を検出する。このように、ガス温度 を含む(2)、(2)′を用いて、ガス漏洩を検出する ことにより、ガス温度変化の影響を受けることなく、正 確にガス漏洩を検出することができる。

【0039】CPU5aは、上述した処理の他に、通過 流量計測処理によって求めた通過流量を積算して積算流 量を求める流量積算処理、この流量積算処理によって求 めた流量積算値を表示部7に表示させる積算値表示処 理、ガス漏洩が検出されたとき、その旨を示す警報を表 示部7に表示させる警報表示処理などを行う。

【0040】以上概略で説明した流量計測装置を組み込 んだガスメータの詳細な動作をCPU5aの処理手順を 示す図6のフローチャートを参照して以下説明する。ま ず、CPU5aは、例えば電池電源投入によって動作を 30 開始し、図示しない初期ステップにおいて、 μ COM 5 内のRAM5cに形成した各種のエリアの初期設定を行 ってからその最初のステップS1に進む。

【0041】まず、CPU5aは、通過流量計測手段と して働き、アンプ6から出力される流量に応じた信号を 取り込み、この取り込んだ信号からガスの通過流量を計 測する通過流量計測処理を行う(ステップS1)。その 後、CPU5aは、温度センサ15が検出したガス温度 に基づき、ガス温度に依存して変動する計測した通過流 量の変化分を補正する補正処理を行う(ステップS 2)。

【0042】次に、CPU5aは、使用判断手段として 働き、上記補正処理により補正された通過流量に基づ き、ガスが燃焼器84によって使用されているかを判断 する (ステップS3)。 具体的には、通過流量が21 L /H以上であるか否かで判断し、通過流量が21L/H 以上であればガスが使用されていると判断して(ステッ プS3でY)、ステップS4及び5に進む。

【0043】続くステップS4及び5において、CPU 5 a は、通過流量を積算する通過流量積算処理を行うと 50 の法則に基づき、式(1)が成立する。 [0036]

共に、その積算値を表示器 7 に表示する積算地表時処理 を行う。一方、通過流量が21 L/H未満であればガス が使用されていないと判断して、後述するステップS6 の漏洩検出処理に進む。

【0044】以下、上記漏洩検出処理の詳細を、図7及 び図8のCPU5aの処理手順を示すフローチャートを 参照して説明する。まず、CPU5aは、温度センサ1 5及び圧力センサ16が検出したガス温度及び、ガス圧 力を、RAM5c内に形成した前温度エリアT1及び前 圧力エリアP1に各々格納する(ステップS61)。次 に、CPU5aは、第1計時手段として働き、RAM5 c内に形成した計時エリアtlをインクリメントして (ステップS62)、所定時間の計時を開始する。

【0045】その後、CPU5aは、漏洩検出手段とし て働き、計時エリアt1が所定時間となり(ステップS 63でY)、計時開始から所定時間経過したと判断され ると、温度センサ15及び圧力センサ16が検出したガ ス温度及びガス圧力を、RAM5c内に形成した後温度 エリアT1及び、後圧力エリアP2に各々格納する(ス テップS64)。以上のステップS61~64により、 前後温度エリアT1、T2及び前後圧力エリアP1、P 2には、所定時間相前後して検出されたガス温度及びガ ス圧力が各々格納されることになる。

【0046】その後、CPU5aは、P1/T1=P2 /T2 (∵上記式(2)) が成立するか否かを判断する (ステップS65)。そして、CPU5aは、上記式 (2) が成立すれば (ステップS65でY) 、ガス漏洩 は生じていないと判断して、リターンする。一方、上記 式(2)が成立していない場合、ガス漏洩が生じている と判断して、その旨を伝える警告を表示器 7 に表示させ る警告表示処理を行う(ステップS66)。

【0047】そして、第1漏洩箇所判断手段として働 き、ガス漏洩箇所を特定するためにガスの通過流量Qi を再び計測し、計測した通過流量Qiが3L/H以上で あるか否かを判断する (ステップS67)。計測した通 過流量Qiが3L/H以上であるときは(ステップS6 7でY)、マイクロフローセンサ1即ち、ガスメータ8 3より下流側のガス供給路10にガス漏洩箇所があると 判断して、その旨を伝える表示を表示器 7 に表示させる (ステップS68)。

【0048】一方、ガスの通過流量Qiが3L/H未満 であるときは(ステップS67でY)、ガスメータ83 より上流側でガス漏れが生じているか、それとも3L/ H未満の超微量のガス漏れが、ガスメータ83より下流 側で生じているか特定するため、図8のステップS69

【0049】図8のステップS69において、CPU5

aは、弁閉制御手段とした働き、遮断弁20に対して弁閉制御信号を出力して、遮断弁20を弁閉させる弁閉制御処理を行う。その後、上記ステップS61~65と同様の動作を行い、ガス漏洩が発生しているか否かを再び判断する。上述したように、温度センサ15及び圧力センサ16より上流側にある遮断弁20を弁閉にすることにより、遮断弁20すなわち、ガスメータ83より下流側でガス漏洩が発生しているか否かを判断することができる。

【0050】そして、CPU5aは、図80ステップS 10 650判断において、P1/T1=P2/T2が不成立のとき(図80ステップS65でN)、ガスメータ83より下流側でガス漏洩が発生していると判断し、その旨を表示器7により表示する(ステップS71)。一方、P1/T1=P2/T2が成立したとき(図80ステップS65でY)、上流側でガス漏洩が発生していると判断して、その旨を表示器7により表示する(ステップS70)。

【0051】上述した図8のフローチャートについて説明したCPU5aの動作から明らかなように、CPU5aは、第2の計時手段及び、第2漏洩判断手段として働くことがわかる。

【0052】このように、ガス漏洩の有無だけでなく、その漏洩箇所も特定して表示器7に表示することにより、ガス会社員が、ガス漏洩箇所の確認する際に、容易かつ、短時間に行うことができる。

【0053】また、上述した流量計測装置は、ガス漏洩検出後に、図7のステップS67において、通過流量Qiが3L/H以上を計測できないときに、始めて遮断弁20を遮断して、ガス漏洩箇所を特定している。このよ30うにすることにより、本発明の流量計測装置は、通過流量に基づいてガス漏洩箇所を特定できるとき、遮断弁20が遮断されることがなく、むやみに遮断弁20が弁閉されることがない。

【0054】さらに、上述した流量計測装置は、補正用の温度センサと、ガス漏洩検出用の温度センサとを兼用している。このように、兼用することにより、それぞれ別途に温度センサを設ける必要がなくコストダウンを図ることができる。

【0055】なお、上述した実施形態では、ガス漏洩検 40 出後に、図7のステップS67において通過流量がQi が3L/H以上でないときのみ、遮断弁20を遮断して、再び式(2)を用いてガスメータより下流側でガス漏洩が発生しているか否かを判断していた。しかしながら、例えば上述したように圧力センサ16が高精度(10Pa以下の分解能)のものであれば、遮断弁20の遮断後に、圧力降下を判断し、圧力降下があれば下流側漏れ、下降がなければ上流側漏れとガス漏れ箇所を判断するようにしてもよい。

【0056】しかし、上記のようにガス圧力のみに基づ 50 理手順を示すフローチャートである。

いて、ガス漏れ箇所を判断する方法では、すでに上述したように温度変化の影響を受け、正確にガス漏れ箇所を判断することができない場合もあるため、上記実施形態のように再び式(2)を使ってガス漏れ箇所を判断する方がよい。

【0057】また、上述した実施形態では、ガス漏洩検出後に、通過流量Qiに基づき、ガス漏洩箇所の判断を行っているが、ガス漏洩検出後に、すぐに遮断弁20を遮断して式(2)又は、圧力変化に基づきガス漏洩箇所を判断するようにしてもよい。しかし、この場合、遮断弁20が遮断されているので、このとき消費者がガスを使用とするとすぐには使用できないという不都合が生じる。このため、上記実施形態のように、通過流量Qiのみでは判断できないときに遮断して判断するようにした方がよい。

[0058]

【発明の効果】以上説明したように、請求項1及び7記載の発明によれば、ガス温度変化の影響を受けることなく、正確にガス漏洩を検出することができるので、漏洩検出精度の向上を図った流量計測装置及び漏洩検出装置を得ることができる。

【0059】請求項2、3及び4記載の発明によれば、第1漏洩場所判断手段により、漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出したとき、その漏洩箇所を特定することができるので、ガス漏洩箇所の確認を容易にかつ、短時間に行うことができる流量計測装置を得ることができる。

【0060】請求項5記載の発明によれば、弁閉制御手段により、漏洩検出手段がガス漏洩を検出中であり、かつ通過流量計測手段が、所定値以上の通過流量を計測していないときのみ、遮断弁を弁閉されるので、むやみにガス遮断弁が弁閉されることがない流量計測装置を得ることができる。

【0061】請求項6記載の発明によれば、補正用の温度検出手段と、ガス漏洩検出用の温度検出手段とを別途に設ける必要がないので、コストダウンを図った流量計測装置を得ることができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明の漏洩検出装置を組み込んだ流量計測装置の基本構成図である。

【図2】ガス供給システムを示す図である。

【図3】本発明の流量計測装置及び漏洩検出装置を組み 込んだガスメータの一実施の形態を示す図である。

【図4】図3のマイクロフローセンサの詳細を示す図である。

【図5】図3のマイクロフローセンサの詳細を示す回路 図である。

【図6】図3のガスメータを構成するCPUの処理手順を示すためのフローチャートである。

【図7】図6に示す漏洩検出処理についてのCPUの処理手順を示すフローチャートである。

14

【図8】図6に示す漏洩検出処理についてのCPUの処理手順を示すフローチャートである。 【符号の説明】

 5 a - 1
 通過流量計測手段(CPU)

 5 a - 2
 使用判断手段(CPU)

 5 a - 3
 第1計時手段(CPU)

 5 a - 4
 漏洩検出手段(CPU)

5a-5 第1漏洩箇所判断手段 (CPU)

5 a - 6 弁閉制御手段 (CPU) 5 a - 7 第 2 計時手段 (CPU)

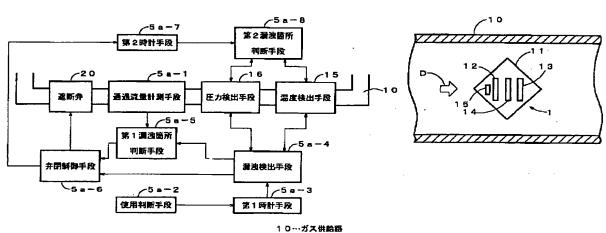
5a-8 第2漏洩箇所判断手段 (CPU)

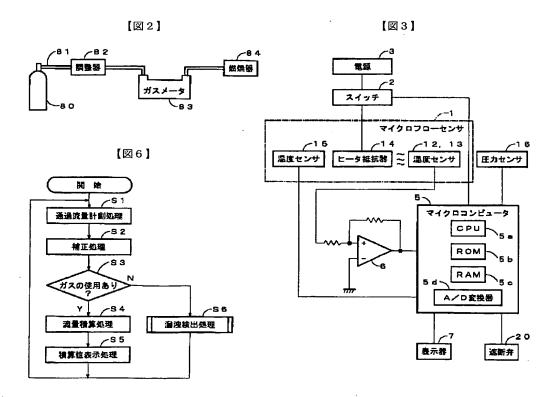
10 ガス供給路

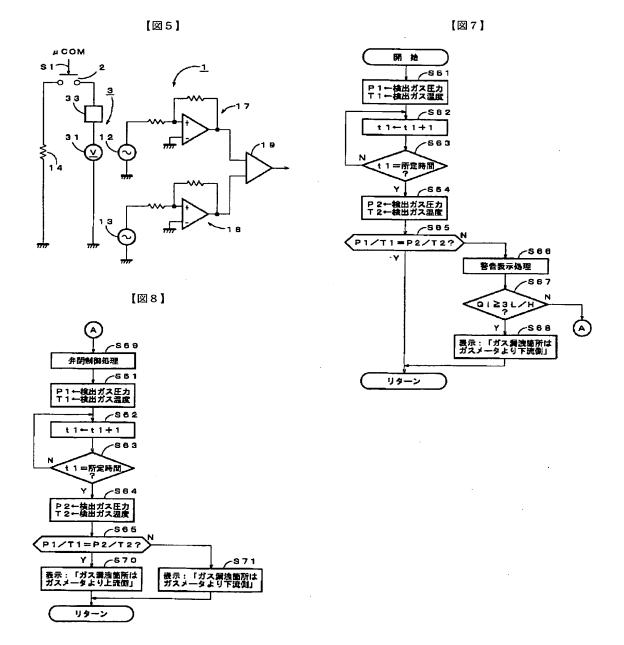
15 温度検出手段(温度センサ) 16 圧力検出手段(圧力センサ)

20 遮断弁 84 燃焼器

【図1】







フロントページの続き

(72) 発明者 温井 一光 神奈川県藤沢市みその台 9 - 10 日本アプ ライドフロー株式会社内

F ターム(参考) 2F030 CA10 CB02 CC13 CD15 CE02 CE25 CE27 CF05 CF11 CF20 2F035 EA02 EA05 EA08 2G067 AA14 CC04 DD02 DD04 DD08